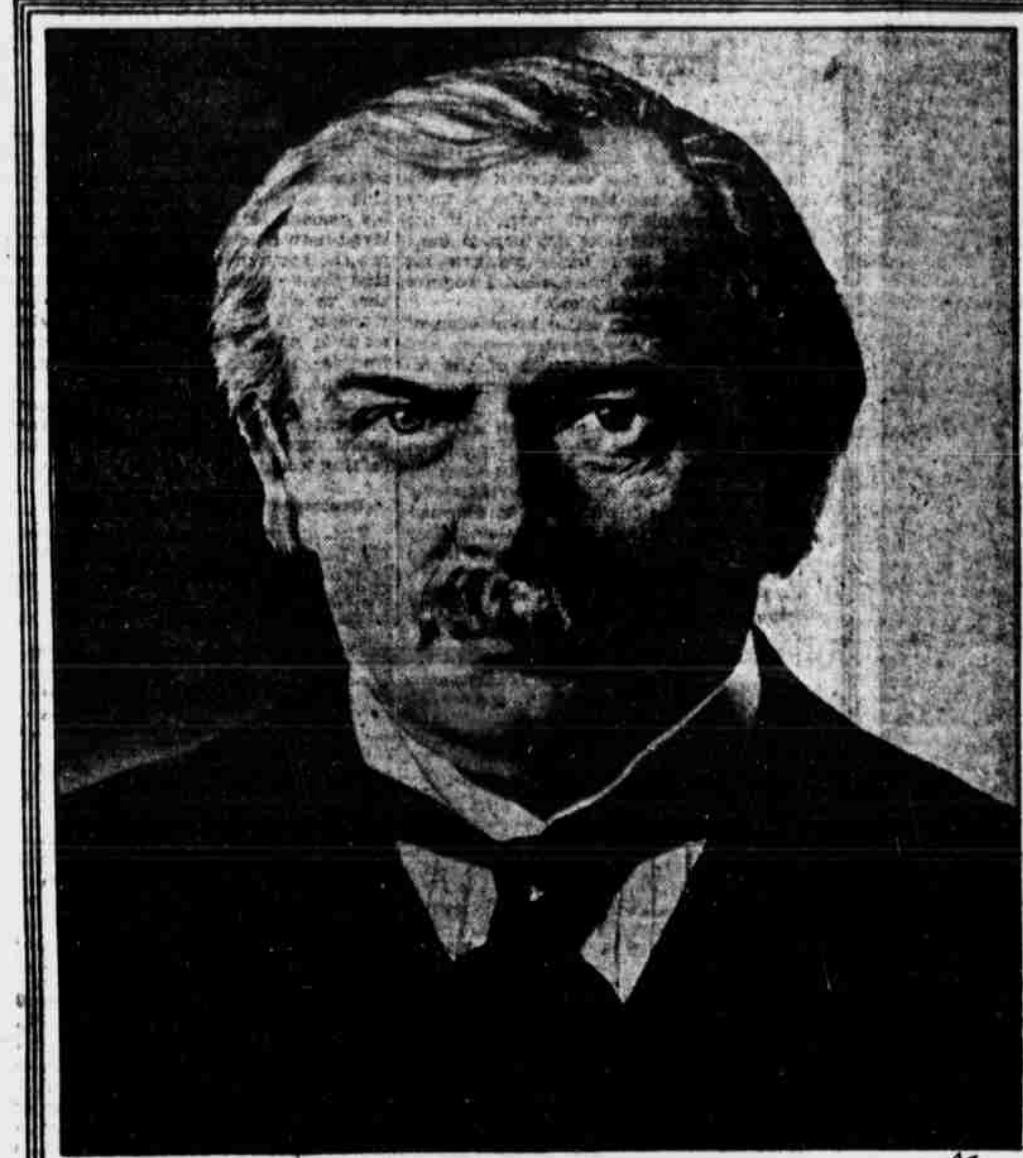
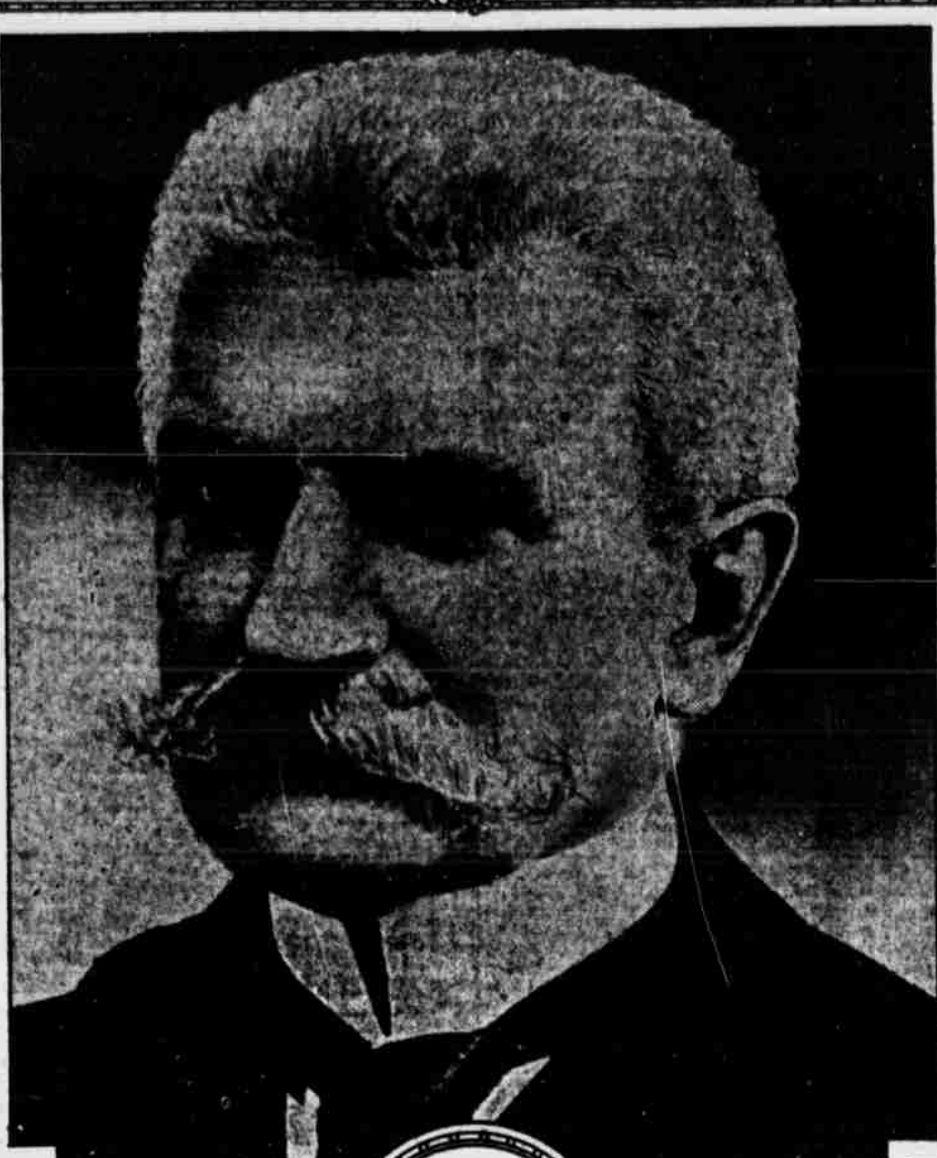


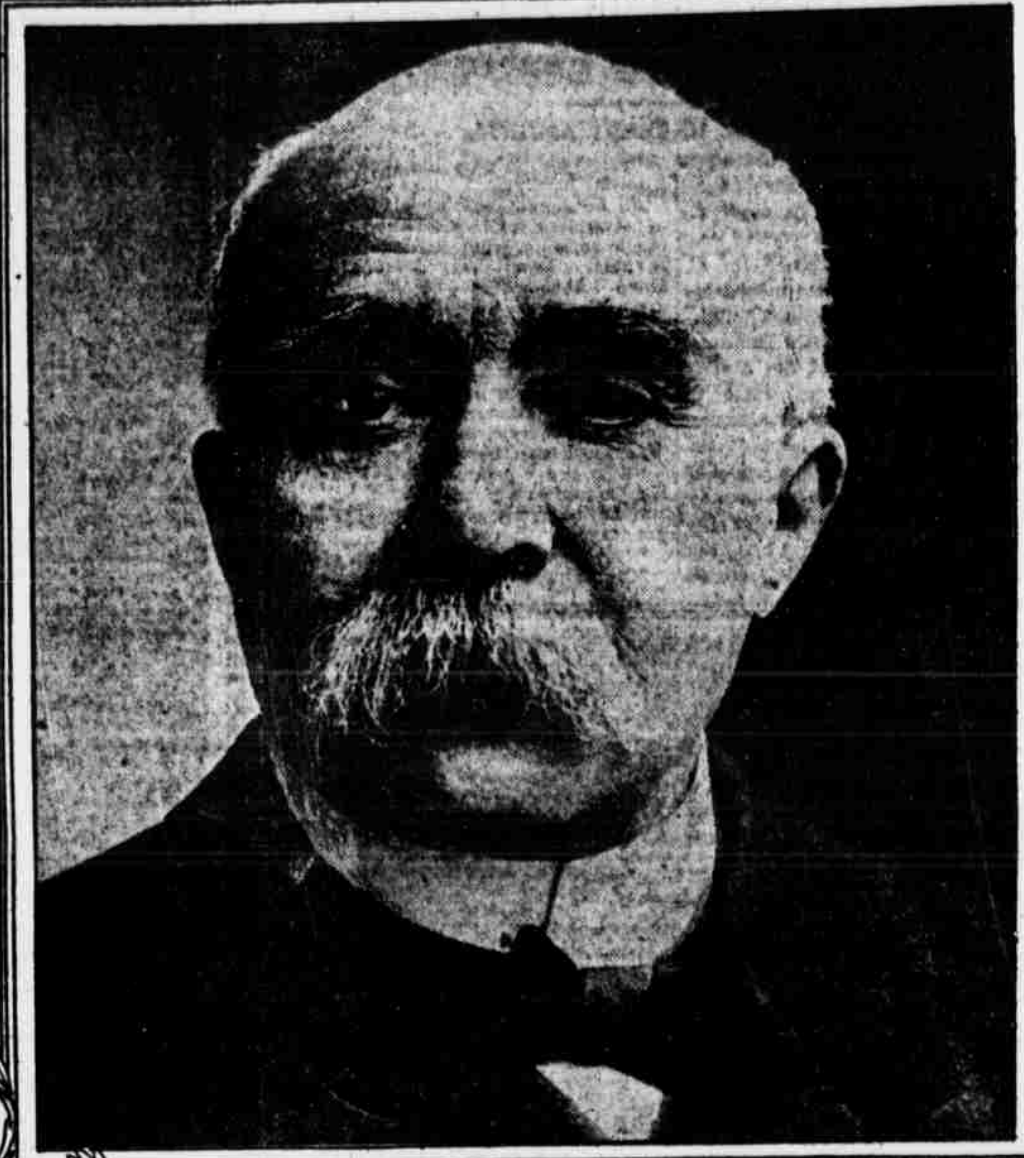
Italy's Future Hinging on Defeat of Sonnino in Coming Election



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BARON SONNINO,
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Political Downfall Looms for Minister of Foreign Affairs, Long an Obstacle to Complete Understanding Between His Government and the Entente

ITALY'S future place in the concert of the Powers of the Entente as well as her economic and political destinies will be very largely determined this month. Within the next three or four weeks the general Parliamentary elections are to take place throughout the dominions of King Victor Emmanuel, and upon the return at the polls will depend whether Italy will remain our associate in times of peace as in the great war her people have been our brothers in arms.

In the impending general election the issue will centre to a great extent upon Baron Sidney Sonnino, who throughout the last five years has proved an obstacle to Italy's complete understanding with the Powers of the Entente. Long ago he had become an object of distrust to the Governments of France, of Great Britain and more recently of the United States. He has been at variance with most of his colleagues in the Cabinet at Rome in matters of foreign policy, which he scarcely condescended to discuss with them. Some of them resigned sooner than tolerate his methods of playing a lone hand and of confronting them every now and again with a fait accompli. He has been openly at odds with Premier Orlando, cordially disliked by his countrymen, and without one vestige of personal popularity or following.

Fiume Changed Situation.

So his early downfall and relegation to private life seemed assured until President Wilson's action on the subject of Fiume. If Prime Minister Orlando resented so bitterly the appeal of the Chief Magistrate of the United States, it was because he realized that it would increase a hundredfold his difficulties in getting rid of Sonnino, and that it had converted the latter into the factor of paramount importance in his administration.

Orlando, who was as much liked by Georges Clemenceau, by Lloyd George and Arthur Balfour, and by the leading American delegates as Sonnino was obnoxious to them all, was in a fair way toward reaching an understanding with them in the difficulties which had arisen in reconciling with the provisions of the Treaty of London the new conditions on the shores of the Adriatic, resulting from the Jugo-Slav Federation with Serbia.

Orlando was as sympathetically inclined toward the Jugo-Slavs and the Serbians as Sonnino was averse to them. He appreciated the importance of Italy's being assured of the friendship of her neighbors on the shores of the Adriatic rather than of their enmity. Sonnino would not give way. Like Shylock of old, he insisted upon having every pound of Austrian flesh promised to him by the 1915 Treaty of London, when the Jugo-Slav state and independent Bohemia were not even dreamt of by the great Powers of the Entente and at the time when Russia was invading the Dual Empire and also penetrating far into the eastern provinces of Germany.

Sonnino Becomes a Hero.

When, however, the President appealed to the Italian people, not against Sonnino, who was the obstacle to an understanding, but against the entire Orlando Government and against its plenipotentiaries at the Paris Peace Conference, declaring that he could not consent to the Italianization of Fiume, the fulfillment of the provisions of the Treaty of London, the Italian nation rose as one man against him, exasperated at what was

They've Thought It Over.

Since then, however, the Italians have had time for more sober reflection. At no moment has their resentment in connection with the Woodrow Wilson message about Fiume extended to the people of the United States. It has been in a very curious fashion restricted to its author. The ties of friendship and good will between the two nations are very close and intimate. There is hardly a family in Italy which does not have one or more of its members living in relative affluence in America, where he has found opportunities for success that were denied him at home.

Easily stirred to excitement, to enthusiasm or to indignation, the Italians are in their calmer moments extremely shrewd, level headed and prudent. It is no reflection on their character to assert that they have a particularly keen eye to the main chance. They have during the last few weeks been reminded by Francesco Nitti and other sagacious statesmen of weight and authority that their country is not one of those which can simply all its own wants.

Owing to the economic and political conditions of the various European countries, and particularly the imbroglio of the labor situation in the old world, Italy can look to no foreign nation for the resources indispensable to her existence save to the United States. The maintenance of her friendship with this country and the avoidance of anything calculated to trouble the intimate and old time understanding with the United States is to her a matter of such vast and vital importance that she on sober reflection will not permit anybody or anything to stand in the way thereof. Sonnino is an insuperable obstacle.

That is why his disappearance may be looked for as the result of the impending general election. Sidney Sonnino, son of an Italian Jew converted to Protestantism and of an English mother, was born, not at Pisa, as stated in some works of reference, nor at Florence, as asserted in others, but in Egypt, where his father was established in business, and where Sidney acquired from his native nurses a wonderful mastery of the Arabic languages which he still retains to this day. He has been Minister of Foreign Affairs at Rome ever since the very early spring of 1914.

If the Kaiser counted upon the assistance of Italy in his mad venture it was largely due to the presence of Sonnino at the Consulta—the Department of Foreign Affairs at Rome. The Baron had been one of the principal champions and upholders of that Triple Alliance by which

Italy had been reduced to a state of absolute servitude to Berlin, where, needless to add, he was held in high favor and regard.

Sonnino speedily recognized on the declaration of war that any attempt to force his countrymen to align themselves with Austria would result in a national uprising, not alone against the Government, but also against the House of Savoy. Even long before the war to call any one in Italy an Austrian was regarded not merely as an insult, but as a legal slander for which damages could be recovered in a court of law.

Their Hatred Deep Rooted.

Victor Emmanuel III. had, ever since he had attained manhood, declined to set foot on Austrian soil. Indeed, it is difficult to convey any idea of the extent of the hatred which existed between the two nations. Alive to this, Sonnino took advantage of the fact that the two Kaisers had embarked upon a war of aggression to refrain from according to them any armed assistance, on the ground that Italy, by the terms of the Triple Alliance, was only pledged to help them in a war of defence.

But Sonnino did the next best thing for Germany. He insisted on Italy's remaining neutral and prevented his countrymen from entering the war until nearly a year had elapsed. Our Italian friends were eager and impatient to join France, Great Britain and Belgium against their arch-enemy, Austria. But Sonnino held them back on the plea that he might be enabled to obtain by means of diplomacy more territory than through a recourse to arms.

He thereupon inaugurated through Berlin a series of negotiations with Vienna with a view to secure from Austria the sacrifice of certain of her provinces as the price of Italy's remaining neutral throughout the struggle.

Sonnino's demands were exacting enough in all conscience. Under heavy and well nigh irresistible pressure from Berlin Emperor Francis Joseph consented to grant them. Then Sonnino regretted that he had not asked more and immediately proceeded to do so, putting forward claims so extortionate that Austria, which had not then been beaten save by the Russians on her remote eastern front, declined to consider them, refusing to be moved any further in the matter by Emperor William.

The original offer of Francis Joseph had been maintained, however, and it is quite probable that Sonnino would have accepted it had not his hand been more or less forced by its becoming known in Italy that she could obtain better terms if she threw in her lot with Great Britain and France. Son-

nino was compelled, somewhat against his will, to go to London, where he found that the Entente was disposed to regard the continuance of Italy's neutrality as an unfriendly act since it was obviously designed to benefit the Central Powers. Moreover, he appreciated the fact that it was impossible to curb public sentiment any longer in Italy, where the people had definitely made up their mind to start fighting against Austria. Accordingly he relieved his feelings by driving the hard-out bargain possible with the Allies, embodying them in what was known from that time forth as the Treaty of London of May, 1915.

Although from that time forth the Powers of the Entente had no cause to regret their companionship in arms with the Italians, yet the Allies had plenty of reason to be dissatisfied with

Sonnino. Although he had declared war upon Austria, he had refrained from proclaiming war upon Germany. Prince Buelow lingered on at Rome; so did the other members of the German Embassy and the swarm of Teuton consular officials throughout the kingdom, until their presence became a national scandal and they were forced by popular sentiment in Italy to take their departure. It was not until German troops were brought to the Isonzo front in order to assist the Austrians in driving back the Italians to the Piave that Sonnino was constrained to recognize that a state of war existed between Italy and Germany.

Always Bred Irritation.

This peculiar condition of affairs was ascribed in Paris and in London to Sonnino and during the last four years there have been frequent causes of friction between him and the British and French Premiers and Foreign Ministers. Thus Arthur Balfour, in response to a question put to him in the House of Commons about some matter of foreign policy in which Italy was not directly concerned, contented himself with answering the inquiry in some length without making any reference to Italy. Sonnino at once construed this omission of Italy's name from the speech as an indication that England and France had determined to go back on the pledges contained in the Treaty of London, and hastened to the French and English capitals in order to demand explanations. In both cities he found a considerable amount of resentment caused by his imputations of bad faith. Nor were his demands for renewed assurances of adherence to the Treaty of London calculated to promote any personal sympathy for him.

Without warning the allied Governments or even the members of his own Cabinet he took upon himself to recognize the Albanian Government as an Italian protectorate, confronting the Entente with a fait accompli. Then in the early part of last autumn it was brought to the knowledge of the Entente Governments that without giving them any warning or obtaining their consent he had started secret negotiations with the Sublime Porte with a view to obtaining certain territorial advantages in Asia Minor from the Ottoman Government behind the back and at the expense of the Allies.

Disliked at Home, Distrusted by Allies, Baron's Hour as Hero, Resulting From Wilson's Fiume Appeal, Wanes With Sober Reflection by Italian People

He Gets a Calling Down.

Lloyd George and Clemenceau are said to have addressed some very pointed language to Sonnino, charging him with persistent trickery, double dealing and disloyalty to the common cause.

And then again, on the very eve of the assemblage of the Peace Congress in Paris, when there was a preliminary exchange of opinions between the plenipotentiaries of the principal Powers held in London, he showed himself so hostile to the aspirations and necessities of the newly constituted States—the Czechs-Slovaks, the Poles, especially against the Jugo-Slavs, the Serbs and the Greeks—that the course which he pursued afterwards in Paris cannot have been a matter of very great surprise to those behind the scenes.

More recently still Sonnino has been affronting the Powers of the Entente again and laying himself open to new charges of trickery by causing the landing of Italian troops at various points in Asia Minor without the approval or knowledge of Italy's allies and anxious as ever to confront them with a fait accompli, which he hoped they might be willing to accept to avoid further discussion and dissension. These coups have not been successful and the troops have had to be reembarked.

Government is Shaky.

Why, in view of Orlando's frequent quarrels and public controversies with Sonnino, has he retailed him in his Cabinet? The answer is that the administration for some months past has been extremely shaky and that Sonnino had impressed upon some of its members that the only way by which it could be saved was by emerging from the war with more spoils of victory than those upon which the Italian nation had set its heart when it started into the fray. How critical the situation of the Cabinet is may be gathered from the fact that it has not ventured yet upon the demobilization of its army, which still is fed and paid

by the State. Once these millions of men have been returned by demobilization to their homes in townlets and villages where there is neither food for their sustenance nor work of a nature to furnish them with a livelihood, trouble is certain to ensue. The fact that the army has not yet been demobilized will prevent millions of citizens, veterans of the last war, from casting their votes at the polls.

Sonnino, it may be added in conclusion, is no friend of the United States and is credited with the proposal of the organization of a Monroe Doctrine for Europe, aimed at America, and with the watchword "Europe for the Europeans." It is a movement designed to prevent the intervention of the United States in purely European affairs and especially in the internal affairs and policies of European nations. It is a union, not alone political, but also economic, and the fact that Sonnino should have permitted his animosity against President Wilson to identify himself with anything of the kind is not to the credit of his statesmanship or to his understanding of the financial, commercial and industrial necessities of his native land.

It's Been Tried Before.

It has been attempted before—for the first time when the crazy mystic Mme. von Krudener took advantage of a temporary infatuation of Alexander I. of Russia to induce him to organize that so-called "Holy Alliance" which led the United States, at the instigation and with the support of the great English statesman and minister at that time, George Canning, to bring into existence the American Monroe Doctrine.

Count Golochowski, the Chancellor of the Dual Empire, attempted the formation of a similar Pan-European political and economic union against America in 1898, at the time of this country's war with Spain, prompted thereto, as in the case of Sonnino, by personal grudges and prejudices against individual Americans.

It was such an evidence of foolishness that it contributed to his downfall not long afterward and to his relegation to the utmost obscurity. A similar fate awaits Baron Sidney Sonnino when as the result of the impending general election in Italy he will be called upon by his countrymen to make way for that enlightened and able statesman, that proved friend of America and champion of Italy's understanding with the United States, ex-Minister Francesco E. Nitti.



THE HOUSE OF
PARLIAMENT AT ROME



FRANCESCO NITTI
MINISTER OF THE ITALIAN TREASURY

Old Cruiser Baltimore

POSSIBLY a majority of the Staten Islanders passing up and down the bay recently did not recognize a historic naval vessel moored for several days off Tompkinsville. This was a two funneled, gray painted vessel of old fashioned lines, the old cruiser Baltimore, once a unit of the famous White Squadron and a veteran of Dewey's fleet at the battle of Manila Bay.

The Baltimore is now the oldest fighting ship in active service in the navy. She was built by the Cramps in 1883 and consequently is 31 years old. Despite her years the Baltimore is in first rate condition, and during the great war rendered most valuable service. She had the honor to head the first convoy of United States troop ships to go overseas, and more recently took part in laying the great mine barrage in the North Sea.

During her convoy duty the Baltimore was put to some severe speed tests for so old a vessel. Her machinery is virtually the same now as it was when built, and she surprised her engineer officers one day when nearing the French coast by reeling off 13 knots, moving faster than she had done for many years. She distanced some British light cruisers of more recent construction.

The Baltimore was hit by a Spanish shell in the battle of Manila Bay, the projectile entering the engine room hatch and burying itself in the steel bulkhead on the port side. The shell and the hole it made have been preserved and are inspected with interest by visitors aboard the staunch old ship. Her officers claim the Baltimore has steamed more miles since war was declared than many a more modern ship in the navy. Her most recent trip was that to Halifax in connection with the transatlantic air flight.